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BLM TO HOST OPEN HOUSE ON GRAZING POLICIES

The Bureau of Land Management will host an open house in Miles City on April 9 to obtain public input on potential changes to its grazing policies. The open house will be held at the Eagles Lodge from 7 to 9 p.m. with a short presentation at the beginning of the session.

Participants will be asked to comment on several policy changes under consideration that seek to improve the long-term health and productivity of the public rangelands. The potential changes comprise what the BLM is calling its "Sustaining Working Landscapes" initiative. By "working landscapes," the BLM means landscapes on the public lands that are both economically productive and environmentally healthy. The policy changes under consideration are aimed at promoting citizen-based stewardship of the public lands. They would do this by providing more options and flexibility for resource managers, ranchers, conservationists, and others to work in partnership to achieve healthier Western rangelands. The potential policy changes would complement the various grazing regulatory changes the BLM is already considering.

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Central to the initiative is the idea of “Reserve Common Allotments,” a new type of grazing unit to help ranchers who temporarily cannot use their permits for various reasons. Grazing permittees could use these reserve allotments for livestock forage while their regular allotments undergo range improvement. Other concepts include conservation partnerships, voluntary allotment restructuring, conservation easement acquisition, and endangered species mitigation.

More information on these potential grazing policy changes can be found at www.blm.gov.

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